Newspapers by ancestry
https://www.newspapers.com/image/395394003

Downloaded on Mar 26, 2024

THE TOP OF POP

David Bowie: The Elvis Of the Seventies

By LILLIAN ROXON

IT WAS JUST AFTER the Elvis concert and David Bowie and I were sitting in his suite at the Park Lane Hotel (that's where record companies put people when they think they're going to make money for them) discussing how primitive the by-products of rock business are.

Toys, for instance. Columbia once put out a Sly doll for promotion. It was just horrible. Atlantic had a Flip Wilson-Geraldine one that said "What you see is what you get" if you pulled a cord. But that was it.

Yet Marc Bolan once showed me a doll of himself someone sent him and it was just brilliant, a work of art.

"If you put out a David Bowie doll with seven changes of wardrobe, I'd buy it," I told David. Imagine what a collector's item that would be, long after Ken and Barbie are forgotten.

"I am a David Bowie doll," he said, jumping up and letting his hands flop loosely by his sides. Actually, he is planning to have one out for Christmas. Would it have dresses and Lauren Bacall hair as well as an orange crewcut and a dozen paisley stretch jumpsuits, so it could be the old David as well as the new? No, he said absently fondling an orange-haired Chrissie doll he'd just bought, but probably it would have hair that grew (the Chrissie doll did) and it would probably say things like "I love you" and "I like to dress up" and I hope that it would have a wardrobe of things like the sequined battle jacket and satin knickers and high laced boots that David and his band wear on stage.

In England, where he is incredibly popular (he's still just an in-group cult figure here but wait till "The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust" LP takes off), fans have already designed Ziggy Stardust stationery for themselves.

David's wife Angela likes the idea of sheets and pillows, and maybe an inflatable Ziggy doll that "moves and grooves with you."

I happen to think that, at least from where the audience sits, all rock-and-roll stars look like dolls, and that there are a lot of people who'd rather collect well-made and designed rock-and-roll dolls than those tacky posters that are nothing more than a bad enlargement of what was never a very good picture right from the beginning.

I also think if the garment industry is really in the doldrums, that they might look a little more closely at the world of music and instead of pirating from it, very clumsily at that, enlist some of its more original spirits to design not just the clothing but an entirely new environment for buying and selling it. I think everything David Bowie has ever worn has been a creative masterpiece right down to the red vinyl wedgie clog boots with the sky-high cork soles. He told me he's always getting ideas from drawings kids send him in the mail. One kid sent him sketches for a whole wardrobe that were just, he paused for the right word, exquisite.

He already has plans to put out a whole sheet of Ziggy Stardust decals with his next album. I saw them and they're really beautiful.

About the only things I've seen rock stars put out are embroidered patches which stupidly are given out to people like disc jockeys instead of fans. The best in my collection is the Allman Brothers' "Eat a Peach," one with a huge embroidered peach. I have it on my upper elbow, next to Quicksilver Messenger Service's "Eagle," and Art Deco "The Who" and Island Records' great "Palm Tree."

Then there are the Rolling Stones' postcards (you get them in the new album, as you probably know), a whole set, expensively designed, but missing the whole point, that they should look like real postcards. A line of rock-and-roll postcards would be just fabulous. I can't think why no one has thought of it.

I know what some of you are thinking now, that all this has very little to do with music, that David Bowie is a bigger talent than his theatrics and his wardrobe and that the success of "Ziggy Stardust," which is probably (now that I've heard the Stones) the best album to come out this year, especially in terms of the way it has completely defined what we can expect from the '70s, should not depend on how many patches it sells.

Still, buying and selling is a part of our everyday reality and it has always surprised me that I can't lose weight at a Cass Elliott spa, have my hair cut at a Rod Stewart barber, learn tie dye at a John Sebastian school, and dry myself down with a Tom Jones towel. I'm not kidding, if it's good enough for Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck, why not Ziggy Stardust, Ruby Tuesday, Eleanor Rigby and the rest of the gang?

David Bowie, a high-kicker, wonders what's wrong with rock idol dolls

AMPLIFICATIONS: That book Fran Schwartz, one of Paul McCartney's old girlfriends, has written, about her rather interesting life, will be published later this year by Straight Arrow Press under the title "Body Count." . . . "Face-Off" a novel that is a cross between "Love Story" and David Dalton's "Janis"—about what else, a female rock star who dies—was written by Canadian sports writer Scot Young. He's Neil Young's father. . . . Not surprisingly, if you know John Prine, his much awaited second album will be called "Diamond in the Rough." . . . The Mystery vocals on Python Lee Jackson's single "In a Broken Dream" sound as if they came from Rod Stewart, don't you think? But no one will say. . . . If you read a lot of rock publications and wonder what people like Richard Goldstein, Michael Lydon, Bob Christgau and R. Meltzer look like, you can take a look at their mugs (and mine) in a new book called "Mug Shots" (World Publishing, paperback $4.95).

9E • SUNDAY NEWS, JUNE 18, 1972

RECORD REVIEW

By DOUGLAS WATT

NEW OUTLET

Stan Kenton, who, like many another jazz or quazi-jazz figure, has lately been reduced to making and marketing his own recordings on a mail-order basis, now breaks through with a new London Records two-disc set released under the firm's

Stan Kenton

Phase 4 label. (Capitol, Kenton's long-time publisher, is out of stock of most of the dozens of recordings made for that firm.)

The new set was taken down in London during a recent European tour and is made up of both pop standards and old and new instrumentals, the recital closing with "God Save the Queen."

Like all previous Kenton bands (this one consists of 19 musicians), the current one is a tightly-disciplined one. The instrumentalists are young, for the most part, and of high quality and there is an enthusiasm about their work.

Kenton has always been interested in sheer power, of course, and the arrangements continue to sound overwhelming at times. But this is a good, representative collection of pieces. Besides such old favorites as the leader's "Artistry in Rhythm," Pete Rugolo's "Artistry in Percussion" and "The Peanut Vendor," which has been a running theme of the band's over all these years, there are new works by Hank Levy ("Ambivalence," "Fringe Benefit" and "Chaps" and others). There are also a nifty sax solo of "Yesterdays" and a buoyant performance of Billy Strayhorn's "Take the 'A' Train," whose opening measures draw applause just as if this were the Ellington crew at work.

Bobby Scott has just supervised the recording of his latest work, "A Catholic Service," for Playboy. . . . Susan Strasberg said at Seafare of the Aegean that she's now taking voice lessons and has had an offer to make her vocal debut at the Concord. . . . Singer Ethel Ennis pairs two new Gladys Shelley tunes, "Sing Me a Tune" and "I Wonder Who My Daddy Is?," on a new Spiral single. . . . Sy Oliver brings his big band to Roseland Friday. . . . Sergio Mendes and his Brazil '77 group are cleaning up in Japan. . . . Italian singer Ricardo Roda, a favorite on Victor's European label, is now headlining at Monsignore.

Candy Man *(Davis, MGM)*
I'll Take You There *(Staple Singers, Stax)*
Song Sung Blue *(Diamond, Uni)*
Oh Girl *(Chi-Lites, Brunswick)*
Nice To Be With You *(Gallery, Sussex)*
Outa-Space *(Preston, A&M)*

Copyright © 2024 Newspapers.com. All Rights Reserved.
Powered by Newspapers.com